

THE BRENCH MINISTRY.

The Approaching Legislative Session.

TACTICS OF THE FACTIONS.

A Herald Correspondent Interviews President Grevy and Jules Simon.

GAMBETTA CHECKMATED.

PARIS, Nov. 12, 1879.

Those who have some little experience of life will recognize the fact that it is not the people whom one most desires to approach that are the most easily accessible. I have just had occasion to convince myself of it, indeed, I ever had any doubt on the subject. Feeling desirous of ascertaining the opinions of some of the leaders of the Republican party, ministers as well as legislators, regarding the political situation, I set myself earnestly to the task. Although men in these positions, elected as they are by the popular vote, should have nothing to conceal as regards their intentions or their programme, the only result that I have been able to arrive at is the conviction that they are all bringing more or less under the influence of apprehension. I use the word "apprehension" advisedly, for that of "fear" will not express my meaning. Reserve conveys the idea of something different from mutism, and it was with mutism the most absolute that I had to contend; not official mutism merely, but it understood, for the only political personage of any note with whom I succeeded in speaking somewhat freely has no official position, and even he confessed himself as approving, or rather not disapproving, the declarations previously made by him and which had been reported to me. But let me take these things in their order.

A VISIT TO MR. GREVY.

The first person to whom I thought of addressing myself was the President of the Republic—M. Grevy. A friend who has his entrée at the Elysée and whom, on account of his position, it would not be prudent to name, took me to the Palace. We neither of us had any idea of the audacity of the proceeding to which we had committed ourselves; it seemed so natural. My introducer undertook to take me with him on one of his visits to the President, who is easy of approach, and to let me converse with him. All this, as I have said, appeared quite natural to us, taking into account the simplicity of habits which the former President of the Chamber continues to observe in his new sphere.

While we were waiting in the crimson salon, which is hung with pale paintings, the President entered, and on his passage through the apartment stopped to talk to my friend, who introduced me by name, omitting, however, my quality as journalist. A hurried conversation ensued, such as usually takes place between people whose moments are precious. There must have been a council of Ministers convoked for that day, from something which fell from M. Grevy. I seized upon the fact to observe—

"It appears, Monsieur le President, that your ministers are not very united?"

"You are mistaken," replied M. Grevy. "I know that reports to the contrary are in circulation, but there is no foundation for them."

"As there is said to be no fire without smoke, Your Excellency," I said, "perhaps it is with the Executive that the Ministry is not in accord?"

"That is another error," replied M. Grevy. "The President of the Republic and his Ministers are perfectly agreed as to their policy."

"And yet there are points in which they may differ, Your Excellency. For instance, there is the Article 7."

"I believe that it will be voted," replied M. Grevy. "And the plenary amnesty (*amnistie plénière*)?"

"The Chambers seem to have exhausted the question," was the reply.

"The fabricators of Ministerial crises may find in it elements of strife," I observed.

The conversation was here interrupted by the secretary who was in search of the President.

The few words interchanged between us did not satisfy me. I allowed a few days to elapse, during which I made efforts to arrive at the other prominent men whom I wished to interview; then when I found that M. Jules Simon, whom I shall speak presently, I asked to be received again by the President of the Republic. I should repeat that on my first meeting with him he could scarcely have retained my name, still less could he have supposed that I was a newspaper correspondent, as the fact was not mentioned to him. My application on this second occasion was strongly supported, and I received a letter asking me the nature of my business with the Chief of the State. I replied that I was requested by my journal to make a pen and ink sketch of him, to describe the members of his Cabinet, and to relate everything connected with them that might be interesting to American readers.

I added that M. Thiers and Marshal MacMahon had obligingly lent themselves to similar indiscretions. I was sent for next day and then I was informed that I was a principle with M. Grevy not to converse with foreign journalists. I was, therefore, compelled to remain satisfied with the few words gleaned on the passage of the President and related above. They embrace merely the important declaration that the President of the Republic believes in the passage of Article 7 by the Senate.

The chief of the State not wishing to be more explicit I addressed myself elsewhere. I made requests for interviews through particular friends of M. Waddington and Freycinet. I was refused, but refused timely, and that only after several postponements. Whether these refusals come from the Ministers themselves or from their secretaries I am unable to say, but they were in each instance accompanied with an explanation of a general kind, which was no answer to the New York Herald, which was held in high esteem, nor to its correspondent, who was personally agreeable to the Minister. "No, no," he said in short they did not want to see me, and not being able to complete my task of interviewing these two Ministers, I felt that the others were to me of little importance and made no effort to see them.

M. GAMBETTA.

I next endeavored to interview M. Gambetta, who, chief of the majority without being head of the Cabinet, is more master of France than the Executive himself, and more Minister in his single person than all the Ministers combined. The realization of this intention presented serious difficulties, apart from other considerations, from the fact that the President of the Chamber of Deputies, after his return from a long absence from Paris, was being overwhelmed with both visits and work. "Do not ask five minutes of me for the next fortnight," he said to the director of the *Revue Nouvelle*, the day previous to that on which I requested him to obtain for me permission to visit him. His announcing in this fashion that he would not go to the soirée of Mme. Edmond Adam was equivalent to saying that he would not leave his apartments at the Palais Bourbon for the period specified. It was, therefore, to my residence that it would be necessary for me to go if I wanted to speak with him. In order to obtain access to him I concluded that I would address myself to the good offices of my *conférencier* of the *République Française*. I was received there by M. Bane, who obligingly placed himself at my disposal, although he did not hesitate to tell me that he did not expect I would succeed. Taking the chance I gave him a résumé of the questions which I proposed to put to the President of the Chamber.

After an interval of a few days I received from M. Bane the following letter:—

"As I foresaw and told you, the reply is negative. M. Gambetta, whom I saw this morning, said to me that he had been frequently solicited to accept interviews of the kind that you seek, but that he had always refused and would continue to do so. It was a resolution seriously adopted and from which no one could induce him to depart. He has, therefore,

begged of me to convey to you my regrets at not being able to comply with your request. I am particularly sorry that I cannot render you any further service in this matter. Believe me, &c., &c.,

"HANC."

I found myself disappointed in this quarter, confessedly the most interesting of all, and reasoned to myself that the most important of the adversaries of M. Gambetta would be the most likely to penetrate the policy and the aims of the President of the Chamber. With this conviction I naturally turned my efforts in the direction of M. Jules Simon, the most formidable of the persons who had endeavored to checkmate him and at the same time the most dangerous of his enemies, as much from the powerful influence which he exercises over certain political groups as from his high personal value.

I therefore endeavored to obtain an interview with M. Simon, and addressing myself to one of his intimate friends I forwarded my request through him, accompanying it with a list of the questions which I desired to put to the former Minister of M. Thiers. They were as follows:—

1. Does M. Jules Simon think that a Ministerial crisis is impending?

2. On what question is the Ministry likely to fall?

3. What will be the political elements of the next Ministry? of what individuals will it be composed?

4. What will be the fate of Article 7?

5. What will be the fate of the amnesty plénière?

6. Will the *scrutin de liste* be voted, and if it will be there will be a dissolution?

7. What will be the preponderant group in the new Chamber?

My intermediary, who professed to know the opinions of M. Jules Simon on all points, offered to satisfy my curiosity at once and I accepted the proposal awaiting the interview. He thereupon made to me the following statement, which he declared to be an almost textual reproduction of an exposé of the situation made privately to his friends by M. Jules Simon.

AN AUTHENTIC EXPOSÉ.

"There is no actual peril menacing the Ministry at present. It will fall neither on the question of Article 7 nor on that of the amnesty plénière. The Cabinet has acted wisely in taking a firm stand upon the last of these issues which will be raised by M. Louis Blanc, and which will not secure in the Chamber more than one hundred and fifty Republican votes, with the addition of those of a few Bonapartists, such as M. Paul de Cassagnac. As regards the Senate there are only fourteen members of that body who are in the way of its passing."

From voting it, as is probable, the discussion of the question should get as far as the Luxembourg. Therefore there is nothing to be apprehended for the Ministry on that issue. As regards Article 7, the only member of the Cabinet likely to be endangered by it is M. Jules Ferry, should he prove obstinate upon the question, in which he notoriously embarked in obedience to orders from M. Gambetta. The Ministry, as a body, has no need, and in fact has no desire, to ally its fate with that of the Grand Master of the University, whom, however, it would be a pity to see sacrificed, for he has all the qualities necessary to a good Minister of Public Instruction.

As regards the question of the *scrutin de liste*, I would second the tribune (it is M. Jules Simon who still speaks) to oppose it and to declare that it would be better to prolong the life of this government, which is known to us, than to open a door to the *marionnettes* of M. Gambetta, who would select men ready to support the electioneering feats of M. de Broglie and Fortin in the next appeal to the constituencies—such as M. de Freycinet, Paul Bert and Chalanel Lacour. The Ministry will no more fall on one of these two questions than on the other. The present hesitations of the organ of M. Gambetta, the *Republique Française*, are a guarantee to it of the prolongation of its existence. And as to the fate of Article 7 itself, it will be rejected in the Senate by the 122 votes of the Right, with the addition of from twenty-five to thirty other votes, which will give a majority of from seven to eight votes. In the future, what M. Gambetta is desirous of obtaining is the substitution of the *scrutin de liste* for the present electoral law. He will get elected by its aid in as many departments as possible—in forty according to his own calculation, in twenty according to mine. Then he will visit M. Jules Grevy and say to him, 'You now see that the *scrutin de liste* of France is chosen yesterday by universal suffrage, while you were elected by a chamber that is no longer in existence. You must, therefore, get out of the way and yield me your place.' To arrive at this consummation, so devoutly wished for by M. Gambetta, the law on the *scrutin de liste* must be passed, and there is every reason to suppose that it is on the Electoral Law that the Ministry will fall."

As Jules Simon will fall, M. Gambetta falls, however, that even of this question he was going too fast, for, after having convinced M. Bardon, who had constituted himself the promoter of the *scrutin de liste*, he is now holding him back. The Electoral law once revised there would naturally be a dissolution of the Chamber. Many of the *amnisties* will enter the new one, but the majority, less advanced than that of the present Chamber, will belong to the conservative-liberal republican element, and will be opposed to M. Gambetta."

M. JULES SIMON JUDGES.

Thus spoke my informant, whom I again questioned as to the attitude of M. Jules Simon, who, in his quality as the vanquished of the 16th of May, was expected to be more militant than he has been since the fall of M. Simon.

M. Jules Simon, dispossessed of M. Gambetta of the dictatorship in 1871, was the reply, "he is to the latter like Baugou's ghost. It is unquestionably the fear of this opposition growing too formidable and rising against him which makes us witnesses of the strange political spectacle of the chief of a majority who dare not be Prime Minister. M. Gambetta wants to arrive at a point at the Presidency of the Republic, without passing through a struggle as President of the Council. That is why he has taken refuge in the Palais Bourbon; and as to M. Jules Simon, who is as well aware as any one that a Ministry which does not include M. Gambetta will be merely an abnormal Cabinet, there is no more reason why he should run amuck against it than against a windmill. It is not because he has not had the opportunity that M. Jules Simon is not a Minister to-day. The vote had scarcely been counted electing his successor Marshal MacMahon when M. Grevy offered him the Presidency of the Council. M. Simon at once refused it on the ground that any Ministry that had not been chosen by M. Gambetta would not last for twenty-four hours."

A VISIT TO THE ACADEMIE.

I wrote down carefully all the leading points in the statement of my informant, who had thus voluntarily constituted himself the mouthpiece of M. Jules Simon—that is to say, all that I have just narrated for the benefit of your readers—and the following day, having received a note from the latter gentleman authorizing me to call upon him at eleven in the morning, I was punctual to the rendezvous.

The eminent academicien received me in his study, the carpet of which was strewn with books, and where the visitor only arrives after passing through a library which I calculated must contain at least fifteen thousand volumes. He wore a sort of jacket and a velvet cap. We seated ourselves before the fire, and after thanking him for his cordial reception, I told him that I was requested by the New York Herald to obtain some information from him on the points which I have enumerated above.

"Is it with a view to publish our conversation in that journal?" he at once inquired.

"Yes, I shall write it on quitting you," I answered.

"Then," replied the academicien, "I cannot answer your questions, because no matter how carefully the conversation may be transcribed errors are sure to creep in. Besides, were it necessary for me to make the public declaration, I would not resort to such contrivances. I should speak on my own account."

"If you are apprehensive of errors," I rejoined, "I will submit to you my manuscript."

"It is just as if you asked me for my signature," replied M. Simon. "I do not say that under other conditions I might not give it to you, but when the circumstances are as delicate as those through which we are passing, it is better that every one should be prudent of speech, or at least, furnish as few elements as possible of gossip to the press. Take, for instance, the *attribution* of the *République Française*, and you will own with me that those who inspire that journal would do well to observe a little more reserve. Certainly I can reply to all your questions and satisfy your personal curiosity, but it will only be on the condition that you promise not to print what I say."

"That is the only thing that I cannot promise you," I replied, "and since you cannot give free expression to your sentiments, if you will permit me, I will speak for you by telling you what M. Jules Simon would have replied to me if he did not believe himself obliged to keep his mouth closed."

Then without awaiting the reply of my somewhat astonished host I proceeded to read to him all his friend had told me, taking care, however, not to name him. M. Simon listened attentively, and when I had concluded I added:—

"That is what M. Jules Simon would probably have replied to me—at least so I am assured."

The illustrious academicien smiled and contented himself with saying:—

"There are in your notes certain quasi-intimate details which prove that you know where to find good sources of information."

"Then I may give these declarations without expiating myself by the risk of being accused of propagating false statements?"

"It is not I that will contradict you," replied the enemy of Article 7.

And he accompanied me to the door of his apartment. Pointing to the disorder of his interior he felt it necessary to excuse it by saying, "Everything is in confusion here. We had an announcement the day before yesterday."

I quitted him with the reflection that he was more formal than the correspondent of the New York Herald, who had been unsuccessfully trying to accomplish the political acquaintance of so many people, whose high position, held as it is by the national will, should at least have given them the courage of their opinions.

ECHOES FROM ABROAD.

London *Truth* would not be surprised were Lord Beaconsfield to be elected to the premiership at the next general election are desperate.

London *Truth* hears that for the present Baron de Bunsen, the German ambassador in London, is in conjunction with Lord Salisbury. Both these statesmen are great favorites of Prince Bismarck and entirely reliable.

The statement in a weekly paper that George Eliot had another book in progress last year is said to be entirely incorrect, but it is true that the head of the literary world is not without a manuscript in the state, and it is unlikely that she will attempt another work.

Sarah Bernhardt says:—"One thing would prevent me from going to America—namely, if I felt that the newspapers would treat me too severely. Some London papers have treated me very badly. I once complained to my friend, and he said to me, 'My dear friend, you are not so badly spoken of as you may think.'"

Commander Cameron is busy with the second volume of his book on the "History of the British Empire." He is expected to complete this month. As the name indicates, the work has reference to the explorer's recent trip down the Tigris river.

According to the *Courier* of the Gironde, the Chamberlain, who was despatched by the Marquis de Lays some six weeks since, flying the American flag, to found an establishment in the islands of New Ireland and New Britain, is about to be followed to the same islands by a French expedition. The latter vessel will sail from Barcelona under the Spanish flag and is to carry two missionaries for the purpose of converting the natives.

A Moscow correspondent writes to the *Color* that the preparations for the Grand Exhibition which is to be held in that city are far advanced. The industrial section is in the hands of the architect, and the horticultural and farm produce is to be located in the central square and the other portions of the Exhibition grounds. The exhibition is to be held in the main body of the building.

London *Truth*, October 13:—"Lord Granville married last week Miss K. MacVickers, a young American lady, who is expected to be a great success. It is curious how many American girls marry Englishmen. This is because they know how to make themselves pleasant. Englishmen, on the other hand, either too rushing and talkative or have nothing to say for themselves. American girls unite the tact and the charm of the English lady with the qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race. They know how to set off their natural advantages with dress and they are almost always philosophically good tempered."

Mr. Lanchester says, apropos of the death of Lady Truro and the discussion which has arisen whether a husband has a right to bury a wife in his garden:—"I had a daughter and was to lose her. I confess that it would have been a great relief to me to have had her buried in a rustic mausoleum. In the first place, her monuments would diversify the aspect of the landscape. In the second place, it would be a monument to my daughter. In the third place, the monument of rural life would be broken, for I should say that the right of the husband to bury his wife in his garden is a right which should be maintained."

London *Truth* observes that in no country except in England is the person passing on the streets allowed to remain in political obscurity. "Elsewhere he would be forced by electors to accept the position of a legislator. Here alone is a gentleman who is not a legislator, and who is not a legislator, without any assured political status. This, it is not admitted, is due to the anonymity of our political life. The electors are not interested in the person, but in the party. For my part I would have every man of note, who writes a leading article sign it with his name. We would then have a more responsible thought and experience mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for newspaper sweaters."

Certain statements attributed to Kossuth have lately been going the rounds of the German press, and have been taken up by the *Revue*. The Magyar patriot has written to the *Revue*, and in his organ of the extreme left, denying the correctness of the statements. He says that he has never believed in the possibility of a durable friendship or alliance between Hungary and Austria. He says that he has never believed in the possibility of a durable friendship or alliance between Hungary and Austria. He says that he has never believed in the possibility of a durable friendship or alliance between Hungary and Austria.

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GLAMOUR, GLITTER AND TINSSEL.

Figures and Fancies of the Lord Mayor's Show.

GLAMOUR, GLITTER AND TINSSEL.

London's Notabilities Pass the Ushers' Ordeal.

PICTURES AND PORTRAITS.

LONDON, Nov. 13, 1879.

Just as regular as clockwork, year after year, does the Lord Mayor's show pass the HERALD office in Fleet street. There is no English institution more solid and stable, apparently, than that most gorgeous and bizarre procession. Age cannot wither, custom cannot change, and the Lord Mayor's show is a thing of the past, and yet it is a thing of the future.

There is more of sublimity than of ridicule in this procession, but in the next one the comic element is introduced. The Lord Mayor's show is a thing of the past, and yet it is a thing of the future. The Lord Mayor's show is a thing of the past, and yet it is a thing of the future.

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